

Making flexible working **work**

Five ways to a more productive workforce



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We hear a lot about the benefits of flexible working—particularly in the public sector, organisations frequently talk about a ‘hat trick’ of benefits:

- saving costs on travel and office space
- reducing admin and creating more time to spend serving citizens
- while also achieving a better work-life balance for their employees

Yet there are too many other examples of flexible working programmes that have failed because they were not thought through, causing confusion among staff and even security breaches.

Flexible working is as much about business change as it is about the technology that enables it. So with a little planning, and a lot of

communication, there are ways to make sure the transition is a happy one for all concerned.

In this How-to guide, we suggest five areas you should focus on to make your flexible working programme a well-planned success.

Key flexible working challenges

Plan thoroughly for a cultural change

Communicate objectives clearly **to staff**

Keep sensitive **data secure**

Change how you measure performance

“We’ve changed the way our people can work. We don’t work a 9-5 anymore – we work when our customers need us to be here.”

Linda Robertson, Programme Manager for Mobile and Flexible Working, Fife Council



A move to widespread flexible working brings challenges, but also many rewards. We recommend five areas that you can focus on to make your roll-out seamless and productive.

1	Set your objectives	Take a step back and ask yourself what you are trying to achieve. Is it cost reduction? Better service? Better work-life balance? Maybe a reduction of desk space or buildings? It could be one or all of those things – by setting your priorities early your future strategy will stand much greater chance of success.
2	Profile your people	Do you know which of your employees spend five days a week in the office and which just come in once to pick up their mail? Take the time to profile your people . It's the only way to get the information you need to make decisions based on what individuals require from their working environment. It'll also help you align the work style to your overall business objectives.
3	Engage with staff as early as you can	It's important that you bring staff with you on the journey. You can make sure your people are engaged as early as possible by making your business objectives clear from the outset. That means articulating three things: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – how flexible working will benefit your organisation as a whole – how it will help your people provide better service to citizens – how it will benefit them as individuals
4	Change the way you measure performance	Once you're up and running, think about changing the way your staff members are measured. For most organisations that will mean measuring people on output and productivity rather than basic attendance . Community nurses, for example, are now frequently assessed on the quality of care they provide to patients in the home, rather than on time spent in an office.
5	Make security a priority	Flexible working often means mobile working – and that means putting sensitive data onto devices that could get lost in the field. But the problems are by no means insurmountable. In fact many can be overcome with managed security solutions that include the capability to remote lock and wipe any device that is mislaid.



Want to find out more?

Watch our **Public Perspectives video series** featured on our **Guardian Partner Zone** where public sector leaders talk about their biggest challenges and **our experts** give insight into shaping future services.

To see our videos and for more information search for: **Vodafone Partner Zone**



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